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ABSTRACT

Accounts of massacres, rumors of slavery, reports of exploitation and the fashionable preoccupation with ecology have all combined to create a conscience about the Amerindian peoples of South America. There now seems to be generalized feelings in Western Europe and elsewhere that something ought to be done about these peoples. The purpose of this report is to give a brief summary of the conditions of the various peoples, to sketch out what policies--if any--the governments of their various republics are adopting towards them, and to suggest ways in which their lot might be improved. The situation of the Indians in the Altiplano of Ecuador, Peru and Boliva, and of the Mapuches in Chile and Argentina differs in character from that of South America's other autochthonous people. This report is concerned with the jungle and plain dwellers of the Amazon basin and adjacent lowlands, excluding the Guyanas and Argentina in detail. It covers the dimensions of the problem; church, army, and state attitudes toward native peoples; and future policy. A select bibliography and The 1971 Declaration of Barbados for the Liberation of the Indians (see RC007427) end the document. (FF)

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WHAT FUTURE FOR THE AMERINDIANS OF SOUTH AMERICA?

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- To secure justice for minority or majority groups suffering discrimination, by investigating their situation and publicising the facts as widely as possible, to educate and alert public opinion throughout the world.
- To help prevent, through publicity about violations of human rights, such problems from developing into dangerous and destructive conflicts which, when polarised, are very difficult to resolve; and
- To foster, by its research findings, international understanding of the factors which create prejudiced treatment and group tensions, thus helping to promote the growth of a world conscience regarding human rights.

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WHAT FUTURE FOR THE AMERINDIANS OF SOUTH AMERICA?

By Hugh O'Shaughnessy

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From the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10th December 1948:

Article 1
All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2
Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

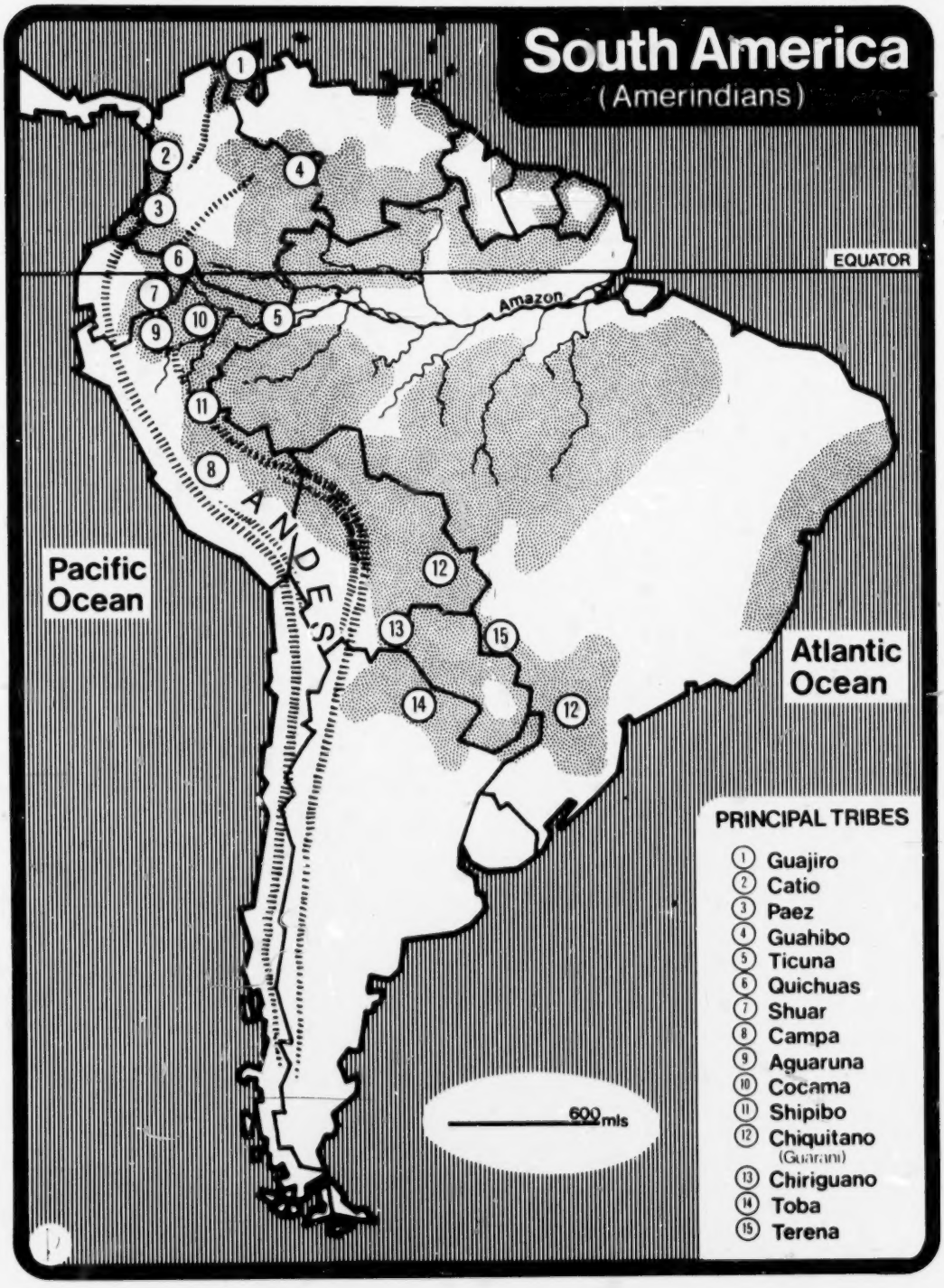
Article 10
Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 19
Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20
(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

South America
(Amerindians)
CARACAS
Venezuela
BOGOTA
Colombia
GEORGETOWN
Guyana
Surinam
CAYENNE
PARAMARIBO
Fr. Guyane
QUITO
Ecuador
LIMA
Peru
Brazil
LA PAZ
Bolivia
BRASILIA
Pacific Ocean
Paraguay
ASUNCION
Atlantic Ocean
Chile
Argentina
Uruguay
SANTIAGO
BUENOS AIRES
MONTEVIDEO
600 mls



This map shows the location of the largest 'tribal' groupings within South America (their numbers ranging from about 6,000 to about 50,000). Most of these groups can be sub-divided into smaller divisions so that the names given in the key may not be strictly acceptable by all the sub-divisions; within the larger groupings, however, there is a certain amount of linguistic, cultural or social affiliation which enables them to be grouped roughly in this way.

It should be noted that a large amount of territory in the Amazon basin and central Brazil is occupied by Amerindians and does not contain any of these larger groups. The tribes in those areas usually have very small populations (often no more than 100), are usually less acculturated than the large groups and are, therefore, much more vulnerable both physically and culturally.

(With acknowledgements to Stephen Corry.)

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

Accounts of massacres, rumours of slavery, reports of exploitation and the fashionable preoccupation with ecology have all combined to create a conscience about the Amerindian peoples of South America. There now seems to be a generalized feeling in Western Europe and elsewhere that something ought to be done about these peoples.

The purpose of this report is to give a brief summary of the conditions of the various peoples, to sketch out what policies – if any – the governments of the various republics in which they live are adopting towards them, and to suggest ways in which their lot might be improved. The situation of the Indians in the Altiplano of Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia, and of the Mapuche in Chile and Argentina differs in character from that of South America's other autochthonous people. I have limited myself to considering the jungle and plain dwellers of the Amazon basin and adjacent lowlands, excluding the Guyanas and Argentina in detail, and I have not attempted to cover Central America or the more advanced Quechua, Aymara and other peoples of the Andean regions.

Given the heated controversies which rage between and among governments and ethnologists about policy towards these 'primitive' peoples I feel it necessary, before I start, to make my own position clear. I am a journalist interested in Latin America and after my journeys round South America in 1972 I do not claim to have completed any new scientific field work. I seek here to present only a broad view of the Indian situation in the area. Faced with the problems arising from the present clash between the advancing Western civilizations of the South American countries and the primitive cultures of the Amerindian peoples I reject the view of some of the more nationalist elements in the South American countries that these primitives must be absorbed and transformed into ordinary citizens of their respective republics as quickly as possible with little or no regard for the preservation of their languages and traditions. This policy seems unjustified on moral and cultural grounds and likely to cause anguish to those on whom it is put into practice.

The indigenous peoples have a knowledge of and relationship with nature from which we ourselves in modern Western societies could learn. (Conrad Gorinsky, for example, has pointed to the value of their knowledge of medicinal plants). Their disappearance would be *our* loss.

At the same time I am also opposed to those who might be called extreme conservationists, anxious to maintain such tribal peoples in their pristine state like so many flies in amber. I feel it is unrealistic and indeed unfair to the people concerned to attempt to do this. For good or ill they and we live on the same planet where communications and contact among peoples are constantly increasing. And while they should be protected against any frontal assault on their civilization they ought also to be given the opportunity to benefit from the positive aspects of Latin American civilization – be these in the realms of medicine, agriculture or other fields. I largely subscribe to the Act of Barbados, signed by a number of distinguished ethnologists after a conference held in 1971 under the auspices of the World Council of Churches and reproduced as an appendix at the end of this report.

Lastly I would like to emphasize that I see no justice or purpose in people in Europe or other rich areas working themselves into a state of high moral indignation over the lack of attention with which some Latin American governments have treated their indigenous peoples. With the exception of the Venezuelan government these governments are poor and the North Atlantic world and Japan are doing much to keep them poor. The fact that, for instance, the secretary of the Paraguayan Department of Indigenous Affairs has no typewriter and has to write her memoranda with a pencil owes something to the distasteful and unjust order of priorities established by the Stroessner dictatorship. But at the same time it reflects the general poverty of a country which the present ordering of international economic relations is doing little to improve.

PART TWO: THE DIMENSIONS OF THE PROBLEM

The Amerindians of South America are a tiny minority of the population of that continent who over the centuries since the coming of the Europeans have suffered massacre, slavery, eviction and exploitation. Despite this and despite the more alarmist reports coming from the area there is good reason to think that they will survive and, given a modicum of good treatment, attain a degree of greater dignity and prosperity.

Since the arrival of the Spaniards and the Portuguese at the beginning of the sixteenth century the response of the aborigine to European encroachment has primarily been one of helpless passivity Slaughtered gratuitously by conquerors, killed off slowly by slave labour, or ravaged by new diseases imported from Europe, the original inhabitants of both the advanced civilizations such as the Aztec and Inca empires and the more primitive societies which are the subject of this study saw their populations fall drastically. Darcy Ribeiro in his book, *The Americas and Civilization*, (Allen & Unwin, 1971) quotes figures to indicate that the original population of the more advanced civilization fell from something between 70 million and 88 million at the time of Columbus to around 3½ million by the middle of the seventeenth century. It is possible that the less sophisticated cultures, with no great city to tempt the European to plunder and distruction, suffered a less steep decline in their numbers during these first 150 years of European occupation and may have been able to survive less unsuccessfully in the forests. But even though many aboriginals escaped the direct domination of the European, only the most isolated and remote groups could escape the measles, influenza, smallpox, malaria and yellow fever brought from the Old World and against which they had no defence. (Today, the common cold, and the TB which frequently follows, is probably their worst health hazard).

For instance in Colombia the population of the region of Pamplona fell from more than 30,000 at the time of the Spanish Conquest to less than 3,000 at the end of the 18th Century. At Vélez, also in Colombia, the number of indigenes fell from 12,000 at the conquest to 2,000 by 1645.

In Chile the Mapuches, the Araucanian peoples, numbered about 1 million at the time of the conquest. The Chilean census of 1907 revealed that their numbers had dropped to 101,000.

The Amerindian was not, however, totally defenceless or wholly passive. His main tactic was retreat into those areas distant from the coast which the European conqueror was uninterested in or incapable of exploring and which were usually only penetrated by the missionary. From his remote fastnesses the Amerindian could defend himself with elusiveness and with his weapons. In those areas which the European was intent on dominating, the aborigine had little defence and in the ninteenth century the European pressed farther and farther into those areas which has previously been the territory of the Indian. Much of what is now southern Argentina was conquered by General Rosas from 1830 onwards. In Chile the Araucanians who had held out against the Spanish empire for 250 years were finally conquered by the forces of the republic in the second half of the nineteenth Century.

The biggest push into Amazonia, the greatest area of refuge for the Amerindian, came about 1880 when the area became the world's largest producer of rubber which grew increasingly into demand as the automobile developed. In the three decades that followed, large parts of Brazil, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia were invaded by companies and individual entrepreneurs who killed off the natives who opposed them, took their traditional lands and made many of the survivors work for them in conditions approaching slavery.

With the rise of rubber plantations in the Far East, the rubber boom collapsed in 1914 and Brazilian Amazonia has to this day never regained the economic importance that it had in those years. But at the same time the collapse of the boom gave a breathing space to the Amerindians who have recovered some of the lands which were once theirs and who have had the economic pressure taken off them.

Another major intrusion into the redoubts of the Indians came in the 1940's when the Shell oil company spent millions of pounds prospecting in the Ecuadorean jungle, an operation which was carried out with little regard for the needs of the native and which resulted in scores, and perhaps

hundreds, of aboriginal deaths and the disruption of their traditional forms of life. Here, as in Brazil with the rubber boom, economic failure produced a retreat by modern civilization and when the oil company failed in its attempts to find oil the Europeans disappeared and the old patterns of life were re-established. (A second successful attempt has been made in recent years to find oil in the Amazon basin in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru).

The second – and less effective – means of resistance to the European was armed counter-attack. The first colonists, bringing with them an efficient administration and armed with horses and firearms, were able to overcome even the warlike Aztec civilizations. In some places such as southern Chile and southern Argentina the indigenes' ferocity combined with a lack of European interest in acquiring their lands to keep the Spaniards at bay. But even among those people who were effectively subjugated by the Europeans there were armed revolts. In a series of uprisings in the 1770's and 1780's there was an effort to restore the Inca empire when the *mestizo* magistrate Jóse Gabriel Condorcanqui put himself forward as the successor to the Inca rulers under the name Tupac Amaru – the name of his ancestor, the last Inca ruler, killed by the Spaniards in 1572. La Paz was at one stage besieged by rebels and the revolt was only put down with the loss of much Spanish and Inca blood. The significance of this episode was not only that natives took up arms against their oppressors but also that they did so in the name of a civilization that had disappeared 240 years before when the Spaniards murdered the last Inca emperor Atahualpa. It was obvious that many subjects of the king of Spain remained intensely faithful to the old traditions.

The more primitive and dispersed peoples of the continent who are the subject of this report were of course unable to mount anything like the revolt which Tupac Amaru did, but his spirit was mirrored in the untold numbers of skirmishes which took place and still take place between groups of forest Indians and marauding outsiders.

The phenomenon of unexpected survivals of racial feeling beneath a Hispanic facade has been well documented elsewhere. In Colombia Víctor Daniel Bonilla in conversations with the author reported the survival of tribal councils among various Andean groups up to the present day, a century and a half after they had been thought to have died out.

Last year the Comité de Defensa del 'ndio in Bogota published *En Defensa de mi Raza* by Manuel Quintín Lame. Lame, who was born in the Cauca valley in 1883 of a fairly rich indigenous family with a long and noble lineage, devoted much of his life to political action among the indigenous peoples from the moment in 1910 when he was elected (on his own evidence) 'Chief', Representative and General Defender of the indigenous councils of Pitayo, Jambalo, Toribio, Purace, Poblazon, Cajibio and Pandiguando. He died in 1967 and his book, written in self-taught Spanish, is clear indication of the sense of racial pride still in the indigenous peoples of the Colombian Andes. Lame suffered more than three years in prison as a result of his agitation but was able to sustain a racial pride that had survived several centuries of foreign domination.

His labours, combined with those of Bonilla, Reichel-Dolmatoff and others, succeeded in changing the climate of opinion in Colombia in favour of more humane attitudes towards the Indians, so that in 1972 – for the first time in Colombian history – a group of white farmers at Villavicencio were put on trial for the murder of a number of aborigines. They were acquitted, on the grounds that they did not know they were doing wrong because they thought Indians were not human. But a retrial has been ordered.

There is no doubt that this sense of separateness from the European persists very strongly among many indigenous peoples, however swamped their cultures may be. Darcy Ribeiro, the distinguished Brazilian ethnologist, in his recent book *Os Indios e a Civilização* (Rio, 1970) commented on the results of a study of Brazilian national life and the disappearance of tribal feeling. "Our investigation ended by proving exactly the contrary with respect to the period under examination, viz. the 20th century. In fact of all the indigenous groups about whom we obtained reliable information we can say that they were not assimilated into Brazilian society as an indistinguishable part of it. Against expectation the majority of them were exterminated and those who survive continue to be indigene: no longer in their habits and customs but in their self-identification as peoples different from the Brazilian people and victims of their oppression. Thus the study that we carried out for UNESCO about a supposed

clear-cut case of the assimilation of indigenous populations in Brazil led to the conclusion that the effects of the impact of civilization on tribal groups brings about an ethnic transformation and not full assimilation".

The work of Darcy Ribeiro has shown that racial conciousness among the indigenes is not quite the delicate and easily crushed flower that it might appear to be to the outsider. At the same time his findings do not give any reason for complacency to those who wish to preserve and protect Indian cultures.

Today there remain perhaps 800,000 Indians in the Amazon basin and adjoining lowlands. Any accurate estimate of numbers is made very difficult by two factors. First, whom does one consider as aboriginies where these people live in widely differing degree of relationship with Latin civilization, ranging from almost total isolation, as in the case of some of the forest tribes, to a high degree of absorption? Secondly, what degree of credence can one put in the often highly defective census results of the different republics? With these caveats, country-by-country estimates follow.

¶ The División de Comunidades Nativas de la Selva of the *Peruvian* Ministry of Agriculture puts the total of indigenes under its protection at a quarter of a million in 64 different reserves.

¶ The *Brazilian* indigenes could number up to 177,000. According to Darcy Ribeiro in his *Fronteras indígenas de la civilización* the number is somewhere between a minimum of 68,100 and a maximum of 99,700. Of these a majority are tribes with a Tupí language (10,450 to 14,350), an Arawak language (11,500 to 16,150) or a Carib language (10,250 to 14,150). But the 1972 Aborigines Protection Society mission found some 77,000 Indians under the protection of FUNAI, with another possible 100,000 outside.

¶ In *Colombia* three different sets of figures point to a total of around 150,000. A booklet published in October 1971 by the Colombian official statistical department (DANE) quotes Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, a leading Colombian ethonologist, with a figure of 157,791 extracted from the 1951 national census; the Pontifical Missionary Organization with a figure of 150,280 (1971); and the Summer Institute of Linguistics (the Protestant Missionary Organization) with a figure of 163,000. (As if to underline the two points made at the beginning of this section DANE reports that the Colombian National Planning Commission puts the figure at 280,000, the Ministry of Government at 297,000, and the Agrarian Reform Institute at 344,000).

¶ In *Paraguay* the Department of Indigenous Affairs, an arm of the Ministry of Defence, estimates the total of tribal indigenes at 58,877 in 6 linguistic families and 198 tribes; but one must also point out that three-quarters of Paraguay's population of nearly 2½ million is of predominatly Guaraní descent and that Guarani is the lingua franca over much of the country.

¶ In *Bolivia* the Summer Institute of Linguistics, under contract to the Ministry of Peasant Affairs, has estimated the number of indigenes at around 83,000 – grouped into tribes ranging down from the 20,000 Chiquitanos to the seven remaining members of the Jorá group.

¶ *Venezuela* contains some 100,000 indigenes, according to an article in the June 1969 issue of the Paraguayan *Suplemento Antropológico* by Dr. Angelina Pollak-Eltz: the largest number of whom (40,000) are Goajiros living in the Maracaibo region, with a further 12,000 in the Orinoco delta.

¶ In *Ecuador* reliable statistics are particularly difficult to establish but a rough approximation would be between 25,000 and 50,000.

¶ In *Guyana* there are an estimated 33,000 Amerindians; while in northern *Argentina* along the border with Paraguay there are perhaps 50,000 more.

All these statistics exclude the Aymaras and Quechuas of the Andes who total 2,000,000 in Bolivia alone and who are also the most important ethnic factor in Peru and Ecuador.

The indigenous peoples continue today to defend themselves from the outsider with the same methods they have used since the arrival of the Spaniards: isolation and armed retaliation when they see no alternative.

As recently as December 20, 1971, Reuter reported from Rio de Janeiro, "The threat of bloody fighting between thousands of Indian tribesmen and white settlers and prospectors in western Brazil (Rondonia) is worrying Indian experts. The experts consider a major clash almost inevitable following an attack by a 200-strong Indian war party on a jungle outpost of the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI) near the Brazilian border with Bolivia". The Cintas Largas burned down a FUNAI outpost on the Roosevelt River killing the three occupants. On December 6, 20 Indians nearby attacked a FUNAI party. FUNAI blamed the incidents on the actions of tin and diamond prospectors and squatters and Reuter quoted the *Jornal do Brasil* as saying there were 10,000 armed prospectors working in the jungles of northern Brazil.

Similar occurences have taken place sporadically throughout the region in recent years. Two tribes in particular have gained a name in modern times for ferocity. In the jungles of the Oriente of Ecuador where the international oil companies have recently discovered vast quantities of oil the Aucas have done their best to keep strangers at bay. In 1956 they killed five missionaries on the River Curaray, continuing the tradition of hostility to strangers which the European world saw demonstrated against the Shell company in 1940. The victims are either speared to death or sometimes buried alive. The Aucas can also be cannibalistic.

In Venezuela, west of Lake Maracaibo, the Bari or Motilones have only been pacified in very recent times by Capuchin missionaries. As little as ten years ago the Bari were still fighting a running war with the land owners round them and a precarious peace is now observed mainly because measures have been taken to reserve their land to them.

The future of these forms of resistance are however nowadays obviously increasingly limited. As roads are built more and more extensively throughout the region, often under military management and for 'strategic' reasons, the Indians' capacity to defend themselves from the foreigner with either remoteness or bows and arrows decreases. To an increasing extent now their fate is bound up with the decisions of the central governments of the republics in which, whether they know it or not, they live.

Darcy Ribeiro's remarks do not mean that the physical survival of the Indian languages and cultures are out of danger. The 1970 report of the Medical Mission of the International Committee of the Red Cross on the physical conditions of life of the Brazilian Indians painted a very gloomy picture indeed. The official National Indian Foundation had scant resources with which to counter the depredations of disease, and in the words of the Red Cross "With no, insufficient or misdirected assistance, there will shortly be no Indian problem to solve".

In an analysis of the fate of Brazilian Indian groups between 1900 and 1957 Darcy Ribeiro found that, of 230 groups extant at the beginning of the century, only 143 still survived 57 years later; that of the 105 groups living in isolation in 1900 only 33 survived in isolation in 1957; and that a further 38 of the original 230 groups had been integrated into Brazilian life to the point where they often had forgotten their language and culture and to the outsiders were all but indistinguishable from other Brazilians. The situation in the rest of the South America is hardly any better than in Brazil.

In only one republic of South America has an indigenous culture achieved a permanent and apparently unshakeable cultural position for itself: in Paraguay, where the Guaraní presence is strong. Bartolomeu Melià, a Jesuit ethnologist, reports that Spanish takes a distinctly second place to Guaraní as the language habitually spoken at home in every area of Paraguay except Asuncion the capital. In that city only 8.72 per cent of households use pure Guarani against 41.15 per cent who for preference speak Spanish. But even in Asunción, which contains 450,000 of Paraguay's 2¼m. inhabitants, 48.55 per cent of homes are reported to use a mixture of Guarani and Spanish. The indigenous language has survived in Paraguay for a number of reasons, chief among them the fact that outside Asunción Spanish colonization was sparse in a country which offered little prospect of easy wealth from minerals, and that Guarani was fostered by the Jesuits in their reductions (virtually autonomous theocracies) in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Even after the expulsion of the Jesuits, the breakup of the reductions and Paraguayan independence from the Spanish empire in the early 19th century, successive dictators seized on Guaraní as a means of fostering the intense, xenophobic nationalism and isolationism that several of them imposed. In the past century and a half of Paraguay's often extremely bellicose and aggressive history – including the war with Bolivia in 1932 – Guaraní has had its uses in encouraging patriotism. In the war with Bolivia it was useful for military radio communication: Paraguayan army messages in Guaraní, for instance, usually remained secure even when intercepted by the Bolivian enemy.

But though Guaraní has in Paraguay a position attained by no other indigenous language in South America it has not got parity of esteem with Spanish. Meliá in an article in the September 1971 issue of his magazine *Accion* comments, "The use of Spanish and of Guaraní is ruled in Paraguay by social and regional factors because each is fundamentally divided into two semantic fields which are difficult to combine. But let us be more exact: the Spanish of the middle- and upper-class covers almost every field of expression, technical, administrative or colloquial . . . on the other hand Guarani cannot enter certain semantic fields, those of science and technology". It is even the case that the person who says he is and believes himself to be bilingual will never touch certain topics in the indigenous language; simply because he cannot, because social custom does not allow him to. Other indigenous languages other than Guaraní in Paraguay have disappeared as they have in Brazil and elsewhere. Though Guaraní does suffer severe disabilities in Paraguay it has at least achieved a place in Paraguayan life unequalled by any indigenous language in any other South American country. It is clear everything should be done to encourage the Paraguayan Government to consolidate and strengthen this unique position of a native culture in which Paraguay with justification does take a good deal of pride.

In this brief diagnosis of the position of the indigene up to the present day, it must be stressed that there is an urgent need for action throughout South America to provide adequate medical, sanitary and hygenic facilities in order to ensure the survival of communities – especially the smaller communities who are in danger of being wiped out by disease, and in particular by imported and unfamiliar diseases.

Perhaps more important is the fact that urgent steps must also be taken to ensure the cultural survival of indigenous communities. In the first instance this means the conversion of most of the individual governments to the realization that their indigenous communities are a unique enrichment of their nationhood, something they should be proud of rather than viewing them as a mere drain on their exchequers or a barrier in the way of the physical development of their outlying territories. From this realization should then flow a determination to ensure the inviolability of indigenous lands, if not in their original broad extension at least in sufficient areas to enable communities to maintain their traditional modes of life. In conjunction with this, governments must make an effort to secure the indigenes from economic depredation from neighbouring European landowners, extractive industries and trading interests, and also do their best to ensure that indigenes can maintain and protect themselves economically whenever they come into contact with the modern money economies.

PART THREE: CHURCH, ARMY & STATE

The survival of indigenous cultures has in recent years been helped markedly by the swiftly changing attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church. The effect of the Church's mission work in the past has in general been to aid in the óbliteration of the Indian cultures, as until very recently virtually every missionary conceived of his or her job as converting the indıgene to Westernized life-styles. Exception must be made to such great figures as Fray Bartolomo de las Casas and Fray Antonio de Montesinos, who interceded with the Spanish king and the conquistadores against the slavery and slaughter being carried out against the indigenes – who, they pointed out, far from being subhuman, were people of 'excellent, most subtle and natural intelligence'. The indigenous peoples of Paraguay and northern Argentina also owe much to the Jesuits who codified a form of the Guaraní language and until their expulsion in 1767 maintained autonomous societies in 'reductions' which, whatever their failings, did at least ensure their inhabitants against massacre and land theft.

The two early Dominicans and the Jesuits of the reductions were exceptional people, but the majority of their colleagues lacked their breadth of vision and humanity. Víctor Daniel Bonilla, the Colombian ethnologist, has compiled an account of the activities of the Catalan Capuchin mission at Sibundoy near the frontier with Ecuador which illustrates that until recently the fathers in that mission were battening on the indigene, enriching their organization with virtual forced labour by Indians on land seized from the latter. He was able to illustrate his work *Siervos de Dios y Amos de Indios* (1969, Bogota, published by the author), with a picture of a friar being carried along in 1965 on the back of an Indian in a chair fixed by a band to the Indian's forehead, and another of 1940 of an Indian held in the stocks. Much of the missionary effort of the Catholic church has unfortunately been closer to that of the Sibundoy Capuchins than to that of Montesinos or las Casas.

Now however – following the Second Vatican Council and the disappearance of much triumphalism in the Church together with many of the presumptions of the superiority of North Atlantic and Latin cultures – the old religious patterns are changing. In Brazil and Paraguay, for instance, the Church is at present the only effective opposition to the tyrannical regimes and this is becoming the case in Bolivia. Slowly but steadily Church leaders in these and other Latin American countries are assuming more modern and more compassionate ideas which include a humbler attitude towards the indigenes.

Gustavo Pérez Ramírez, a radical Colombian priest who has been active on the Indians' behalf quotes in his book *Planas, las Contradicciones del Capitalismo* (Bogota, 1971, Ediciones Tercer Mundo) quotes a colleague of the Divine Word Missionary Society, "A missionary whose mind is obsessed by the 'falseness' of 'pagan' culture, 'immorality', 'darkness', 'depravity' and 'blindness', who sees nothing among his people but 'spiritual poverty', 'sin' and 'the dark night of paganism' should examine the eyes of his own faith".

Writing in the November 1970 number of the Asunción Catholic monthly *Acción*, Bartolomeu Meliá, who is the advisor to the Archbishop of Asunción on Indian matters, wrote: "The 'civilized man' was able to create problems for the Indians but he probably will not be able to find solutions . . . The problem of the indigenes has become difficult because we find it inconceivable to leave the Indians alone: to leave them alone on their lands, to leave them alone with their social and pol tical customs, to leave them alone to decide for themselves what cultural traits should be preserved and which changed, to leave them alone so they can go on being different.

"This does not mean passivity in the face of the problem of the indigenes but firm action to protect the Indians from ourselves, from the ranch owners, from the store keepers and perhaps from the missionaries".

The tone of Pérez Ramírez and of Meliá – and they are not alone – is much changed from that of the early friars whose early Christianity went hand in hand with the Spanish Inquisition. It offers some hope for the future as far as the preservation of indigenous cultures is concerned.

The Catholic Church, though the largest and longest established Christian missionary organization in the region, has during the last century been coming under increasing competition from Protestant groups, particularly from the US. It is difficult to generalize about the efforts of these groups but it

would be fair to say that they tend to be fundamentalist in their theological approach and conservative in their politics. They are often endowed with considerable finance which enables them to operate freely, but at the same time the presence of US citizens among their number excites suspicion among the local authorities. Many of them are conscious of this and, not wishing to run the risk of expulsion, make sure they do not give offense to the governments who have the power to order their swift departure. The result is that they chose, or are forced, to preach conformity. They tend to reject the politics of 'conscientization' which many native-born Catholic missionaries are able to preach with the active or passive support of their bishops. The Protestants, many of whom come from the Southern or Mid-Western parts of the US, tend to be a brake on any movement which seeks radical new solutions to the problems of the indigenes.

Lest a too gloomy picture is given of the workings of the Protestant missionaries one must add a word about the Summer Institute of Linguistics. This organization, though for understandable political reasons it tends to play down its fundamentalist evangelistic role in favour of its academic aims, is basically dedicated to the translation of the Bible into as many native languages as possible and the promotion of literacy among the indigenes so that they can both read it and teach it to others. The founder of the SIL, Dr. William C. Townsend, was a missionary in the 1930's among the Cakchiquel Indians in Guatemala who, finding himself frustrated by the lack of the Bible in the local vernacular, built up an institute of indigenous linguistics which is now a part of the University of Oklahoma. This is associated with a group known as Wycliffe Bible Translators. The SIL has signed a number of agreements with governments in the region which allows it to persue its ends unmolested and to import duty free the radio and other equipment necessary for its activities. The objectives of the SIL as set out in its agreement with the Colombian government are:

"a) the profound study of each language, with the adequate analysis of its phonetic and morphological system and a comprehensive and useful collation of its vocabulary;

b) a study of the aboriginal languages comparing them with each other and with the other languages of the world so that they may be duly classified;

c) the recording of tapes of each language or dialect copies of which will be given to the (government) Division of Native affairs;

d) the gathering of all types of cultural anthological data and the preparation of photographic documents on the racial aspects, the dress, dwellings, utensils, furniture, instruments, industries and other features of indigenous life, which will be directed to the practical end of the better understanding of each culture and the preparation of the campaigns needed for the general bettering of each group studied and its graduation to higher and more useful standards of living."

The 1969-70 annual report of the SIL in Bolivia showed that it, for instance, operated two light aircraft in the country for a total of 66 hours a month, maintained 19 radio stations and was working on translations of the Bible into Aymará, Chácobo, Chiquitano, Chipaya, Eseejja, Guarayu, Guaraní, Ignaciano, Quechua, Sirionó and Tacana. The SIL computer in Mexico produces instantaneous translation and the computer tape can provide immediate photocopies of proofs. This well endowed unit is doing valuable work in creating a permanent record of disappearing native tongues and cultures – whatever one may think of the prime objective of the missionaries.

At least as important as the changing role of the Church in South America is the increasingly important role of the army. With the civil power and the Church, the army has traditionally been one of the three pillars on which South American civilization is founded. Military influence is on the increase. Throughout most of the area we are considering the army is formally or effectively in control of the government – in Brazil, Peru, Argentina, Bolivia and Ecuador – while in Paraguay the army is a close auxiliary in the rule of the president, General Stroessner. In every capital the word of the military carries great weight.

However even if political power were to return to civilian hands everywhere the armed forces are in control of central government, the role of the armed forces would continue to be crucial to the development of the indigenous population. In many areas of the Amazon basin the presence of army

personnel is the only token of central government sovereignty. The river craft, aircraft and telecommunications of the armed forces are often the best – and often the only – links between areas of indigenous occupation and the rest of the country. Often too, as in Ecuador, Paraguay, Brazil and Colombia the air forces run civil airlines which are the only scheduled services for passengers and freight. In many cases the local army commander has jurisdiction over indigenous areas, but even where he has not, his conduct and the example he sets in his dealings with the indigenes are of enormous importance.

With the interior of South America offering greater and greater promise of mineral wealth and oil in Columbian, Ecuadorean, Bolivian and Peruvian Amazonia, the military presences in indigenous areas are likely to increase as the task of patrolling and effectively occupying areas of economic importance is taken more seriously. For instance, the trans-Amazonian highway south of the Amazon and the new road to be built north of the Amazon (the most ambitious development projects to have been mounted in the region) are coming about at least as much because of 'geopolitical' and strategic arguments from the Brazilian army as from any cold calculations by the government's civilian economic advisers.

It is now necessary to examine the different governmental attitudes to the indigenous communities. For convenience the countries may be divided into three groups: those who have effectively no policy (Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Venezuela); those whose policy is in course of formation or major change (Colombia and Peru); and those where there is a policy which is firmly established (Brazil).

Bolivia

There is no effective policy or action by the Bolivian government towards its indigenous communities who live in the forests. Though there is a Ministry of Peasant Affairs this concerns itself principally with the Quechua and Aymara peoples who since the revolution of 1952 have been increasingly politicized and through their leaders at times been able to influence the course of national politics. These peoples have therefore claimed the lion's share of the human and financial resources of the ministry, which in any case were and are chronically inadequate for the task of promoting the welfare of the two peoples of the Andean altiplano. Even if this were not the case with a *per capita* national income in Bolivia of £65 a year, the country as a whole is clearly unable to afford any adequate Indian protection programme. In addition Bolivia suffers from constant chronic political instability with frequent changes of government which make the persuance of any coherent long term policy difficult.

As if this were not enough, historically the central government has found great difficulty in making its writ run in the sparsely populated eastern areas, some of which over the past century have simply been annexed by Brazil. Travel between La Paz and outlying jungle centres of population like Cobija or Riberalta is today done by often unreliable air service: the alternative is days of uncomfortable road and river travel.

Since the guerrilla campaign of Che Guevara in 1966-67 the armed forces – and especially the Ranger batalions under expert US tuition – are now more at home than they ever were in the jungles. They are therefore likely to become an increasingly important factor in the approach to the indigenes.

The indigenes in Bolivia are consequently under the effective control of the few settlers in their lands who are able to treat them as badly or as well virtually as they choose. The other main influence on them is the missionaries – the Catholics and the ubiquitous Summer Institute of Linguistics.

Ecuador

Similar conditions to those obtaining in Bolivia could until recently have been said to have obtained in Ecuador. The country is poor with *per capita* annual gross national product of less than £100, and the funds available to government are very scanty. Ecuador still mirrors Bolivia in its political instability

and insofar as the authorities concerned themselves with indigenous affairs the attention was monopolized by the Andean Indians.

As in Bolivia the armed forces have come to play a major role in Amazonian jungles. Though since the tailing off of the rubber boom – already referred to – the Oriente had until recently been of little economic interest, the central government was obliged to make its presence felt in the jungle areas. Ecuador has seen its jungle territories progressively lopped off by its two more powerful neighbours, Colombia and Peru. It is not satisfied with the present demarcation line and must maintain an official presence so that in any future flare-up of the territorial question the Quito government will at least be able to claim effective occupation of the area currently assigned to it.

The situation of the indigenes in the Oriente has in recent years been immeasurably complicated by the discovery of very large quantities of petroleum in the Ecuadorean Amazonian jungle. The finds have been large enough to make feasible the construction of a trans-Andean pipeline which was inaugurated in mid-1972. Eventually Ecuador will become the second largest Latin American oil producer after Venezuela.

This has produced a greater collision between the indigenous civilization and a modern incursion than Ecuador has previously seen. According to a report published in 1969 on the Auca tribe on the River Napo, the arrival of the oil companies has resulted in the Aucas losing all their land, despite a promise by the then President José Mariá Velasco Ibarra in 1960 that the tribe would be assured of title to the bulk of their territory. The re-establishment of the oil companies on land that Shell had vacated in the 1949's has not passed without a struggle and at time prospecting camps have been set upon by bands of indigenes.

In its understandable haste to get the oil flowing from the Oriente fields and the consequent benefits from the royalties and taxes, the government has done little or nothing to protect the living condition of the aboriginal peoples.

The discovery of the oil has brought with it an increase in the already established drift of settlers from the crowded Andean areas of Central Ecuador. The government, through its agrarian reform IERAC, is facilitating this movement by providing basic services in townships for the settlers. Summing up the authorities' attitude to the indigenes around Lago Agrio, the principal new petroleum centre, the leading Quito daily *El Comercio* of 17 November, 1971 reports: "In the zone in which the settlements are being installed there probably lived tribes which moved on after harvest seasons. IERAC has planned a sector as reservation for the Alamas. It is called Alama Reservation. The Cofanes are also located and will be respected. There is a possibility that they will join the co-operative movement.

"As for the Aucas it is felt that there is a group which has been integrated to society and has links with the evangelical missions. It seems that there is a small rebel group which has drawn back into the zone of Curaray. *They constitute no obstacle to the settlement programme*". (my italics).

The School of Sociology of the Central University of Ecuador in a study of the Quichuas of the Coca and Napo region found that in one typical canton, Aguarico, 36 per cent of children died before reaching the age of 5, and that 70 to 80 per cent of the population were suffering from malnutrition and anemia. The Capuchin mission hospital of Coca and Rocafuerte reported it has treated no less than 496 out of a total population of the two places of 499, 18 per cent of those treated having bronchial or lung infections, 17 per cent anemia and a further 17 per cent intestinal parasites. The communities, the University report said, were well on the way to extinction.

Paraguay

As we have already seen, Paraguay is very much a special case among the South American republics in that an indigenous language and therefore some indigenous culture survives vigorously alongside a Spanish-speaking one.

This does not however alter the fact that the Paraguayan government has not yet formulated an effective policy to ensure the survival of rural indigenous tribal groups. Even if it had one it is difficult to see where, given the present poverty of the country and the low level of administrative honesty in handling the funds of the public sector, much money would come from to implement it.

Meliá writing in November 1970 to a number of *Acción* commented, "In the mind of every government that Paraguay has had, Indian land has meant no one's land: thus the State sells it or gives it away to whoever wants it; and thus it is that forest product companies have been set up or colonies of foreign immigrants, or centres for Paraguayan settlers or ranches. In all these cases the only one who has not had any rights has been the person who has inhabited them for centuries". (See, for example, the horrifying report – including allegations of genocide and slavery – about the Aché Indians by Mark Münzel, published by IWGIA in Copenhagen in January 1973). "They are expelled from their lands their forefathers occupied for centuries and go and occupy others whence they are again expelled by the legal owners and become veritable pariahs," said Brigadier-General Ramón César Bejarano some years ago.

The choice of quotation is important. Bejarano was responsible for the development of the Department of Indigenous Affairs that was established in 1958 as part of the Ministry of National Defence and which is now the principal arm of the government charged with responsibility for the indigenes. It is now headed by Colonel C. C. Infanzón. Bejarano was one of a number of army officers who took, and still take, an interest in the welfare of the indigenes.

In Paraguay as in Bolivia and Ecuador the army is directly responsible for the administration of territory. The majority of the centres of population of the Chaco, the home of numbers of indigenes, are the army forts established there after the Chaco War with Bolivia in 1929-35.

Paraguay differs from Bolivia and Ecuador in having an informed and influential group of intellectuals in Asunción; ethnologists, such as Leon Cadogan, Miguel Chase Sardi and other who run the distinguished Anthrological Supplement to the *Revista del Ateneo Paraguayo*, missionaries like Meliá and José Seelwische O.M.I., as well as the soldiers who represent a body of informed, humanistic opinion on indigenous questions.

Venezuela

Like its neighbour Colombia, Venezuela was for long content to leave the fate of its Indians to the missionaries, most of whom were Catholic. The machinery of the state consists of a National Commission for the Indigenes, a honorary consultative body of ten experts to advise the government. This commission has an executive arm, the OCAI or Central Office for Indigene Affairs. Through lack of resources and expertise this seems to have accomplished little since it was set up in 1952.

The greatest concentration of executive power over the living conditions of the indigenes appears to lie in the state Commission for the Development of the South (or CODESUR), which is charged with bringing economic development to much of the area south of the Orinoco River that has generally not been touched by the oil wealth upon which Venezuela's economy is now based.

Walter Coppens in a document published in 1972 by the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs of Copenhagen chronicles a case of invasion of the lands of the Yekuana people in Venezuelan Amazonas territory which illustrates the extreme slowness of the official bodies to oblige the intruders to surrender Indian territory they had appropriated.

Professor Esteban Mosonyi of the Central University of Venezuela in his contribution to the World Council of Churches publication *The Situation of the Indian in South America* (Geneva, 1972) is reasonably hopeful about the future. He writes, "Finally there is a fact of fundamental significance which permits us to entertain reasonable hopes that Venezuelan policy regarding the Indians will be recast on lines of self-management and interculturation. Contrary to what is happening in other

countries, the Venezuelan Indian does not find himself subjected to the pressure of great economic and political interests. The anti-Indian elements in this country only represent small and medium scale vested interests; the recalcitrant small stock-breeder, the missionary with the pretension of a big landowner, the common soldier who wants to own land, adverturers of dubious antecedents, miners at the bottom of the social scale. For the moment this picture shows no sign of changing, because the country is oriented towards large-scale oil production and mining, which only tangentially affect the aboriginal population. Moreover, the great currents of internal migration, far from moving towards the Indian periphery, tend to concentrate on existing urban centres".

Peru

Peru has since 1968 been ruled by a military government that, sweeping away half-hearted civilian opposition movements, has engaged on a series of drastic measures which if and when they take full effect will transform Peruvian society. This government is currently implementing a comprehensive new measure to regulate the relationship between the indigenous communities of the lowlands and the rest of society. One of its principal architects was Stefano Varese, a signatory to the Barbados Declaration, who from 1970 to 1972 was head of the Native Forest Communities Division of the Ministry of Agriculture. The fact that Varese was able to keep his official job after having signed a document that would have frightened some governments give some indication that the Peruvian government is willing to tolerate and perhaps implement new ideas.

In a recent pamphlet published by the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs in Copenhagen, Varese comments thus on the government's legislative plans. These bills (on land reform in the jungle, and another on native forest communities) are complementary with respect to the tribal groups; they establish the legal existence and recognize the juridical personality of these societies (which were not recognized by previous legislation), and guarantee their territorial rights, protecting common and collective property and assuring technical assistance and credits from the State. This legislation extends to those tribal groups which reside in the highland forest but are not included within the jurisdiction of the Agrarian Reform Law.

"The Forest Native Communities Bill is basically a legal instrument which attempts to make the rights of the native minorities compatible with the general needs of the country through support of their local organizations, or communities, by means of their representative institutionalization in the eyes of the State. To this effect the Bill provides for the organization of tribal groups into federative unities with stable economic and social bases to be attained through state assistance in the form of credits and technical and administrative aid for the attainment of their rights.

"Inasmuch as, according to the government itself, 'the nature of the Agrarian Reform does not consist in a simple distribution of land, but rather in a transfer of economic, social and political power from the hands of a restricted group to the mass of the peasantry (Avance 1970:1). the measures taken with respect to the tribal communicities cannot be limited to empty words about their rights. There is the clear realization that the objective ought to be the radical restructuring of the economic and power system and that to attain this goal not only an economic and social transformation, but also a profound cultural transformation, is necessary. To attain these ends, however, it is necessary for the State to assume effective control of the system of socio-economic relations which we have sketched above. Obviously this is no easy task, if one considers problems such as the effective and administrative distance of the areas of tribal occupation, the economic limitation of the State in implementing a policy of action embracing all the areas, and the slight motivations of local officials to modify their attitudes and detach themselves from the sources of local power'."

In short the government is in process of adopting sound, far reaching ideas. The question is whether it can put them fully into practice before many of the tribal groups disappear. In Peruvian Amazonia, just as in Bolivian Amazonia, oil has been found in large quantities and this could cause the same degree of dislocation in Peru as it has in its neighbour.

Colombia

Historically the government of Colombia has left the care of its indigenes to Catholic missionaries and, to a lesser extent, to the Protestants. In fact nearly three-quarters of the area of the country is still mission land where Catholic missions, under an agreement signed in January 1953 with the Vatican which supersedes others signed in 1902 and 1928, are given many legal rights and privileges as well as subsidies. These subsidies are set at 30,000 pesos for each of the 16 vicariates and apostolic prefectures together with a further lump sum of 360,000 pesos.

An agreement between the government and the SIL in 1962 obliges the government to give the latter a furnished office in Bogota, free fuel for its aeroplanes, free landing rights and duty free import privaleges. It also pledges the government to buy back from the SIL anything useful they leave behind in Colombia if the agreement ever lapses.

After long years of leaving the indigenes to the Catholic missionaries, the government in 1960 founded the División de Asuntos Indígenos (DAI) as a dependency of the Ministry of Government, taking over the functions of a body which had existed for two years as a dependency of the Ministry of Agriculture. DAI was given the task of putting into effect the pious hopes of a law of 1890 which sought to safeguard the well-being of the indigenous peoples and bring them into contact with Colombian life.

Since its foundation it has done some useful work, particularly in conjunction with INCORA, the agrarian reform institute. But it lacks funds and, more importantly, it lacks a full government commitment to enforce safeguards against abusive practices against indigenes by local landowners and others.

At the moment there is a full scale reassessment of policy towards the indigenous communities going on, a process that has been hastened by the propagating work of Bonilla and other ethnologists on their own account and within a pressure group called the Comité de Defensa del Indio. In November 1971 President Pastrana set up a Consejo Nacional de Política Indigenista (National Council on Policy towards the Indian) with a very wide brief to recommend future policy on the question.

Again in Colombia as in other countries the armed forces play an important role in contacts between the indigenes and outside civilization. Training in anti-guerrilla techniques and the pursuit of rural guerrilla groups have given the army a familiarity with the outlying parts of Colombia that they never had before. This conduct in one specific instance, and by implication in many other places, has been the subject of bitter criticism by Gustavo Pérez Ramírez, a Jesuit who directed ICODES, a sociological institute in Bogota. In his account of the Planas affaire he accuses the army of taking part in 'unjust persecution, death, tortures and subhuman conditions of imprisonment' directed against the Guahibo Indians on the River Planas in 1970.

Brazil

The governmental policies of Brazil have been the subject of more controversy than those of any other South American state despite the fact that the country has fewer Indians than, say, Peru. The concentration by international public opinion on Brazil has resulted in the impression gaining currency that the fate of the indigines in South America is coterminous with the fate of the indigenes in that country. This, as we have already seen, is not the case.

In the beginning of this century Brazil produced an organization second to none in South America for the protection of the well-being of the Indians. The Servico de Proteção aos Indios was founded by a soldier and explorer of Indian blood, Marshal Cândido Rondon, and for many years fulfilled a mission of gentle and understanding contact with the primitive peoples. This mission was carried on jointly with a process of linking the lands of the far west of Brazil to the metropolitan region along the Atlantic coast. •

The spirit of Rondon did not however long survive his death and by the 1950's and early 1960's the SPI, riddled with corruption and double dealing, had become an international scandal, despite the efforts of a number of devoted men within its ranks.*

In 1967 the SPI was abolished and replaced with a new Fundação Nacional do Indio, a department of the Ministry of the Interior. FUNAI is presently under the control of General Oscar Jerónymo Bandeira de Mello. Before assuming his post in June 1970 he had been director of Security and Information of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Mines and Energy. He had also been chief of the general staff of the First Military Region.

In a booklet distributed by FUNAI within Brazil, it exhorts Brazilians not to regard Indians as undersirables. It adds, "Rather we must accept them as different peoples, put in front of us by a quirk of history and who must continue their march alongside ours until we can together go forward on the same path, thus avoiding the possibility of creating ethnic castes completely alien to the cultural tradition of our country."

The key to the proper treatment of the indigenes was seen by General Bandeira de Mello in an interview in the magazine *Realidades* (of October 1971) as being the reserves. "It is only within the reserves that the Indians can have the guarantee of a process of voluntary, gradual and guided integration" he stated.

In the same issue of *Realidades* Professor Paulo Nogueira Neto, of the University of São Paulo, claimed too that the creation of many more 'parques indigenas' on the pattern of the Xingu National Park founded by the brothers Orlando and Claudio Villas Boas was the principal solution to the problems of the indigenes. This would prevent the robbery and extermination of Indians by the whites which are continuing even today. But in February 1973, a few days after they had achieved their ambition of contacting the Krenakores tribe, the Villas Boas brothers announced their intention of abandoning their work.†

Extremely sensitive to at times exaggerated European accusations of genocide and ethnocide, the Brazilian government has lately undertaken a wide ranging public relations campaign, which culminated at the end of 1972 with an invitation to the Aborigines Protection Society of London to send an investigating mission to report on present conditions. Its members were Dr. Edwin Brooks, René

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* Late in 1967, the Brazilian Government issued a report which caused international concern and shock: it disclosed that its own Indian Protection Service (SPI) had been directly and indirectly involved in the widespread destruction of the native Brazilian Indians with whose welfare it had been entrusted. 134 functionaries, including officers at high government levels, were charged with over 1000 crimes, ranging from murder, torture ("from tearing out Indians' fingernails to allowing them to die without assistance") and theft of Indian land. The Attorney-General at the time "estimated that property worth $62 million had been stolen from the Indians in the past 10 years."

† They then stated: "We are leaving the life of backwoodsmen because we are convinced that every time we contact a tribe we are contributing to the destruction of the purest things that tribe possesses . . .

"We never truly reached our objectives. All the 'pacified' Indians slowly lose their characteristics and authenticity and their culture is corrupted through contact with civilized outsides. Once pacified, they stopped being free and they interrupted the continuation of their culture. Even if they remain in their natural habitat they are subject to the pressures of civilization. It is a shame. In Brazil there still is no Indian policy which can both pacify the Indian and keep him isolated from contact with the white man. That results in the corruption of his customs and the devaluation of his race. But we could do nothing to avoid this. It is true that sooner or later the Indians will be absorbed by our society. But the longer we delay this integration, the greater our chance to save the Indians as a people.

"An Indian is not an animal to be chased and hunted. He is a human being and the principal difference between him and the civilized peoples is that the Indian has not been corrupted.

"The Indians are not a primitive people, they are peoples with a parallel culture. That means it makes no sense to talk in terms of 'pacification.' "

Fuerst, John Hemming and Francis Huxley. The mission in its report expressed among its conclusions the conviction that "the very real and pressing dangers facing the Indians of Brazil stem neither from malevolence nor from deliberate cruelty. They are due to ignorance and prejudice which readily ally themselves with the ruthlessness of interests whose cupidity is content to see pledges broken and even the small Indian reserves violated rather than lose a chance of gain. This ruthlessness cannot be continued without a matching determination on the part of the government. . . . Incidents, such as the re-routing of the BR80 highway, and subsequent dismembering of the Xingu Park, the planning of a highway through Tumucumaque and the retreat of the Aripuana Park to make room for a colonising settlement, all show that once development interests are involved Indian Reserves are hardly worth the maps they are drawn on."

"Although . . . it is not easy to strike the right balance between protection and paternalism . . . we forsee the more primitive or recently contacted groups needing protection for a long time to come. For more acculturated groups we see a need for better education and practical training . . . In any event it is imperative that the Indians themselves set the rate for change which should come only at a speed they can accept. This means that each Indian nation should be treated as a separate case . . .". The Mission also recommends that ". . . the career structure of FUNAI be fashioned to ensure that the growing experience of the field workers is properly utilised and rewarded".

"The great new roads being driven across the Brazilian interior are a symbol of the country's extraordinary economic growth but at the same time they menace the cultural and physical survival of the tribal minorities along their routes". The Mission recommends that "some of the budget for each new road should be specifically allocated to the continuous protection, medical and social, of those suddenly threatened by it".

The Mission's final comment is that ". . . the real predators of the Indian may well be in New York, London or Frankfurt . . . Denunciations of the Brazilian authorities for condoning . . . genocide should instead be directed at an insatiable economic system which is about to wreak great damage on the fragile ecosystem we call the Amazon rain-forest. We believe that, far from participating in genocide, FUNAI is struggling to help the Indians entrusted to it . . . it is far better to offer constructive suggestions than to show patronising disdain".

The APS mission, which found evidence that the Brazilian Indians' population has increased during the last six years, saw the question of the guaranteeing of land for the Indians as 'the crucial test' of the government's attitude. The inference in the report was that the effectiveness of government plans was yet to be proved, particularly as in another part of the report the authors say that it was even difficult to get reliable maps of some of the areas reserved for Indians.

The importance of securing a territorial base for the indigenes had been emphasised in 1971 by Robin Hanbury-Tenison who on behalf of the Primitive Peoples Fund (now Survival International) conducted an investigation in Amazonia with the assistance of the Brazilian authorities. The Hanbury-Tenison mission itself came hard on the heels of an investigation by the International Committee of the Red Cross which had gathered evidence of extremely poor health conditions among the indigenes. The Red Cross commented "It seems however that at the present time the resources of the FUNAI are inadequate to cope with this vast problem of the integration of the Brazilian Indians in ways that are acceptable from the humanitarian and cultural points of view".

An even less tolerant view of the activities of FUNAI was expressed in 1971 in a manifesto signed by more than 80 Brazilian experts who said that its policy of removing indigenous groups away from the areas of pioneer occupation "contradicts its specific function which is to protect the Indians and create conditions for their close association with Brazilian society".

1973 should see the promulgation of a new Statute of the Indian aimed at regulating definitively Brazil's policy towards indigenes.* The government's draft bill has however been under fire from the Catholic Church which considers it insufficiently rigorous. The Church authorities have drawn up their own code and it will be interesting to see whether the final bill will lean towards the interests of the Indians or the interests of developers.

* The Statute of the Indian, first proposed in 1970 and temporarily shelved due to pressures brought on by publicity, is now again being considered for passage into law. It would permit the legal removal of Indians from their territories by the Brazilian government if this is seen to be in the best interest of "national development or national security." The Statute states that until he has become 'civilized' or assimilated into the national community, the Indian remains a ward of the government without inherent rights. Two provisions, which would prove extremely detrimental, would allow that Indian people have the use but not ownership of traditional territories; also, mineral wealth and forest resources on these lands are to be excluded from Indian control. The "Indigenous Income" obtained from the leasing of Indian lands to lumber, mining, and other firms, and the direct profits from the sale of mineral, forest, and other products on Indian land would go not to the Indian themselves but to the government agencies administering Indian affairs.

PART FOUR: FUTURE POLICY

It is now time to turn from a summary of the present situation to suggesting some ways forward. In the last few years the denunciations of ethnologists, humanitarian societies, churchmen and other interested parties have done much to bring the plight of the indigenes before world opinion. Within South America the various governments are more on their guard about this issue and are recognizing that their treatment of their indigenous populations is a topic they must handle carefully if they are not, at the least, to lose points in the game of international diplomacy.

After this 'softening up period' the time is now ripe for some more concerted action by international organizations concerning the problems of the indigenes. The internationalization of the question would have a number of advantages. Firstly, an international body would be able to pool the most expert available ethnological, agricultural, medical and economic resources in a concerted effort to formulate and execute a rescue plan for the indigenous peoples. The world's best expertise could, on an inter-disciplinary basis, be concentrated on the task: and since these people are part of mankind's heritage, the funds for the work should receive international contributions. (Both European and South American countries have acquired large profits from the colonizations which destroyed the Indians' culture).

Secondly, it could ensure the harmonization and co-ordination of national policies towards indigenous groups who happened to bestride an international frontier. Venezuela and Colombia are two South American countries which have officially committed themselves to co-operation on indigenous questions, but international rivalries and sheer administrative apathy have prevented the idea being generally implemented elsewhere.

Thirdly, it could facilitate the delicate process of persuasion and diplomacy with the various sovereign governments whose action and co-operation is required.

The problems are obvious: there is likely to be local resentment at any special help for the Indians unless help is also given to the peasantry. And there are several different opinions amongst anthropologists about the desirability of various policies of integration. For the moment individual South American governments are justifiably slow to accept or act on criticism – especially from the rich North Atlantic countries whose governments and bankers have in the recent past shown such sublime disregard for the financial and developmental difficulties of Latin America, or from individual foreign critics who display no understanding of the acute shortage of money and manpower which faces any government in the region which undertakes the work of Indian protection programmes.

An international body, if it set about the task with sufficient diplomacy and were able to invest the task with prestige and importance, might also be able to win over the armed forces in the individual countries to the cause of protecting rather than exterminating the Indian. Another essential requirement is to provide the Indians with legal assistance to help them to defend their all-important land rights.

This new international body would benefit greatly if it could draw on the experience and expertise on the specialized agencies of, for example, the United Nations, FAO, UNICEF, WHO, the Economic Commission for Latin America, and UNESCO: this would point to the body being set up within the UN.

To do this would be to run the risk of allowing the new body to suffer the constraints of the UN. It would doubtless run into funding problems and would also be subject to the politicking and blocking procedures. On the other hand the fact of being part of the UN 'family' would give the body a prestige and acceptance not otherwise easily available.

An alternative would be the use of some independent specialised international body such as a new foundation or Survival International which, like Amnesty International, could have consultative status with the UN. This might avoid the problems of politics but it would make the task of gaining acceptability a more difficult one.

Any body which was set up might well consider it prudent to take into its sphere of interest all the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere. This would prevent the Latin Americans reacting adversely to a feeling that they were in some manner being pilloried by the outside world; and it would also allow Latin American experts to assist the US and Canadian governments in the treatment of such peoples as the Red Indian tribes and the Eskimos. That would help us all to realize that bad treatment of minorities is not confined to South America.

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APPENDIX

The Declaration of Barbados for the Liberation of the Indians

Note: this Declaration was the outcome of a symposium organized by the Ethnology Department of the University of Berne, and held at Bridgetown, Barbados, from the 25th – 30th of January 1971, under the auspices of the Programme to Combat Racism and the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches. The symposium on the situation of the forest Indians in South America was one of a number of responses to the decisions made by the Uppsala Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1968 and the subsequent meeting of the Central Committee in Canterbury in 1969. The Uppsala Assembly stated:

> "Racism is linked with economic and political exploitation. The churches must be actively concerned for the economic and political well-being of exploited groups so that their statements and actions may be relevant. In order that victims of racism may regain a sense of their own worth and be enabled to determine their own future, the churches must make economic and educational resources available to underprivileged groups for their development to full participation in the social and economic life of their communities. They should also withdraw investments from institutions that perpetuate racism. They must also urge that similar assistance be given from both the public and private sectors. Such economic help is an essential compensatory measure to counteract and overcome the present systematic exclusion of victims of racism from the main stream of economic life. The churches must also work for the change of those political processes which prevent the victims of racism from participating fully in the civic and governmental structures of their countries.

Consequently, the Assembly decided that the WCC should "undertake a crash programme to guide the Council and the member churches in the urgent matter of racism. This programme would involve:

- the development of comprehensive and up-to-date reports on the racial situation in various regions of the world;
- consultations on racism on a regional and international level;
- research on the areas of potential crisis, alerting the churches and secular agencies in helping to prevent the growth of tensions arising from racism".

Membership of the Barbados Symposium, held at the Centre for Multi-Racial Studies of the University of the West Indies, was limited to qualified anthropologists and ethnologists, mainly from Latin America. They were required to have worked with Indians and so to have first-hand experience.

The anthropologists participating in the *Symposium on Inter-Ethnic Conflict in South America*, meeting in Barbados, January 25 – 30 1971, after analysing the formal reports of the tribal populations' situation in several countries, drafted and agreed to make public the following statement. In this manner, we hope to define and clarify this critical problem of the American continent and to contribute to the Indian struggle for liberation.

The Indians of America remain dominated by a colonial situation which originated with the conquest and which persists today within many Latin American nations. The result of this colonial structure is that lands inhabited by Indians are judged to be free and unoccupied territory open to conquest and colonisation. Colonial domination of the aboriginal groups, however, is only a reflection of the more generalised system of the Latin American states' external dependence upon the imperialist metropolitan powers. The internal order of our dependent countries leads them to act as colonising powers in their relations with the indigenous peoples. This places the several nations in the dual role of exploited and exploiters, and this in turn projects not only a false image of Indian society and its historical development, but also a distorted vision of what constitutes the present national society.

We have seen that this situation manifests itself in repeated acts of aggression directed against the aboriginal groups and cultures. There occur both active interventions to "protect" Indian society as well as massacres and forced migrations from the homelands. These acts and policies are not unknown to the armed forces and other governmental agencies in several countries. Even the offical "Indian policies" of the Latin American states are explicitly directed towards the destruction of aboriginal culture. These policies are employed to manipulate and control Indian populations in order to

consolidate the status of existing social groups and classes, and only diminish the possibility that Indian society may free itself from colonial domination and settle its own future.

As a consequence, we feel the several States, the religious missions and social scientists, primarily anthropologists, must assume the unavoidable responsibilities for immediate action to halt this aggression and contribute significantly to the process of Indian liberation.

The Responsibility of the State

Irrelevant are those Indian policy proposals that do not seek a radical break with the existing social situation; namely, the termination of colonial relationships, internal and external; breaking down of the class system of human exploitation and ethnic domination; a displacement of economic and political power from a limited group or an oligarchic minority to the popular majority; the creation of a truly multi-ethnic state in which each ethnic group possesses the right to self-determination and the free selection of available social and cultural alternatives.

Our analysis of the Indian policy of the several Latin American nation-states reveals a common failure of this policy by its omissions and by its actions. The several states avoid granting protection to the Indian groups' rights to land and to be left alone, and fail to apply to the law strictly with regard to areas of national expansion. Similarly, the states sanction policies which have been and continue to be colonial and class-oriented.

This failure implicates the State in direct responsibility for and connivance with the many crimes of genocide and ethnocide that we have been able to verify. These crimes tend to be repeated and responsibility must rest with the State which remains reluctant to take the following essential measures:–

1) guaranteeing to all the Indian populations by virtue of their ethnic distinction, the right to be and to remain themselves, living according to their own customs and moral order, free to develop their own culture;

2) recognition that Indian groups possess rights prior to those of other national constituencies. The State must recognise and guarantee each Indian society's territory in land, legalising it as perpetual, inalienable collective property, sufficiently extensive to provide for population growth;

3) sanctioning of Indian groups' right to organise and to govern in accordance with their own traditions. Such a policy would not exclude members of Indian society from exercising full citizenship, but would in turn exempt them from compliance with those obligations that jeopardise their cultural integrity;

4) extending to Indian society the same economic, social, educational and health assistance as the rest of the national population receives. Moreover, the State has an obligation to attend to those many deficiencies and needs that stem from Indians' submission to the colonial situation. Above all the State must impede their further exploitation by other sectors of the national society, including the official agents of their protection;

5) establishing contacts with still isolated tribal groups is the States' responsibility, given the dangers – biological, social and ecological – that their first contact with agents of the national society represents;

6) protection from the crimes and outrages, not always the direct responsibility of civil or military personnel, intrinsic to the expansion process of the national frontier;

7) definition of the national public authority responsible for relations with Indian inhabiting its territory; this obligation cannot be transferred or delegated at any time or under any circumstances.

The responsibility of the Religious Missions

Evangelisation, the work of the religious missions in Latin America, also reflects and complements the reigning colonial situation with the values of which it is imbued. The missionary presence has always implied the imposition of criteria and patterns of thought and behaviour alien to the colonised Indian societies. A religious pretext has too often justified the economic and human exploitation of the aboriginal population.

The inherent ethnocentric aspect of the evangelisation process is also a component of the colonialist ideology and is based on the following characteristics:

1) its essentially discriminatory nature implicit in the hostile relationship to Indian culture conceived as pagan and heretical;

2) its vicarial aspect, implying the reification of the Indian and his consequent submission in exchange for future supernatural compensations:

3) its spurious quality given the common situation of missionaries seeking only some form of personal salvation, material or spirtual;

4) the fact that the missions have become a great land and labour enterprise, in conjunction with the dominant imperial interests.

As a result of this analysis we conclude that the suspension of all missionary activity is the most appropriate policy for the good of Indian society and for the moral integrity of the churches involved. Until this objective can be realized the missions must support and contribute to Indian liberation in the following manner:

1) overcome the intrinsic Herodianism of the evangelical process, itself a mechanism of colonialisation, Europeanisation and alienation of Indian society;

2) assume a position of true respect for Indian culture, ending the long and shameful history of despotism and intolerance characteristic of missionary work, which rarely manifests sensitivity to aboriginal religious sentiments and values;

3) halt the theft of Indian property by religious missionaries who appropriate labour, lands and natural resources as their own, and the indifference in the face of Indian expropriation by third parties:

4) extinguish the sumptuous and lavish spirit of the missions themselves, expressed in various forms but all too often based on exploitation of Indian labour;

5) stop the competition among religious groups and confessions for Indian souls – a common occurrence leading to the buying and selling of believers and internal strife provoked by conflicting religious loyalties;

6) suppress the secular practice of removing Indian children from their families for long periods in orphanages where they are imbued with values not their own, converting them in this way into marginal individuals, incapable of living either in the larger national society or their native communities;

7) break with the pseudo-moralist isolation which imposes a false puritanical ethic, incapacitating the Indian for coping with the national society – an ethic which the churches have been unable to impose on that same national society;

8) abandon those blackmail procedures implicit in offering goods and services to Indian society in return for total submission;

9) suspend immediately all practices of population displacement or concentration in order to evangelise and assimilate more effectively, a process that often provokes an increase in morbidity, morality and family disorganisation among Indian communities;

10) end the criminal practice of serving as intermediaries for the exploitation of Indian labour.

In so far as the religious missions do not assume these minimal obligations they, too, must be held responsible by default for crimes of ethnocide and connivance with genocide.

Finally, we recognize that dissident elements within the churches are engaging in a conscious and radical self-evaluation of the evangelical process. The denunciation of the historical failure of the missionary task is now a common conclusion of such critical analyses.

The Responsibility of Anthropology

Anthropology took form within and became an instrument of colonial domination, openly or surreptitiously; it has often rationalised and justified in scientific language the domination of some people by others. The discipline has continued to supply information and methods of action useful for maintaining, reaffirming and disguising social relations of a colonial nature. Latin America has been and is no exception, and with growing frequency we note nefarious Indian action programmes and the dissemination of stereotypes and myths distorting and masking the Indian situation – all pretending to have their basis in alleged scientific anthropological research. A false awareness of this situation has led many anthropologists to adopt equivocal positions. These might be classed in the following types:

1) a *scientism* which negates any relationship between academic research and the future of those peoples who form the object of such investigation, thus eschewing political responsibility which the relation contains and implies;

2) a *hypocrisy* manifest in rhetorical protests based on first principles which skilfully avoid any commitment in a concrete situation;

3) an *opportunism* that although it may recognize the present painful situation of the Indian at the same time rejects any possibility of transforming action by proposing the need "to do something" within the established order. This latter position, of course, only reaffirms and continues the system.

The anthropology now required in Latin America is not that which relates to Indians as objects of study, but rather that which perceives the colonial situation and commits itself to the struggle for liberation. In this context we see anthropology providing, the colonised peoples with the data and interpretations both about themselves and their colonisers useful for their own fight for freedom, and re-defining the distorted image of Indian communities current in the national society, thereby unmasking its colonial nature with its underlying ideology.

In order to realize the above objectives, anthropologists must take advantage of all junctures within the present order to take action on behalf of the Indian communities. Anthropologists must denounce systematically by any and all means cases of genocide and those practices conducive to ethnocide. At the same time, it is imperative to produce new concepts and explanatory categories from the local and national social reality, in order to improve the subordinate situation of the anthropologists regarded as mere "verifiers" of alien theories.

The Indian as an agent of his own destiny

Indians must organise and lead their own liberation movement otherwise it ceases to be liberating. When non-Indians pretend to represent Indians, even on occasion, assuming the leadership of the latter's groups, a new colonial situation is established. This is yet another expropriation of the Indian populations' inalienable right to determine their future.

Within this perspective, it is important to emphasise in all its historical significance, the growing ethnic consciousness observable at present among Indian societies throughout the continent. More peoples are assuming direct control over their defence against the ethnocidal and genocidal policies of the national society. In this conflict, by no means novel, we can perceive the beginnings of a pan-Latin American movement and some cases too of explicit solidarity with still other oppressed social groups.

We wish to reaffirm here the right of Indian populations to experiment with and adopt their own self-governing, development and defence programmes. These policies should not be forced to correspond with national economic and socio-political exigencies of the moment. Rather, the transformation of national society is not possible if there remain groups, such as Indians, who do not feel free to command their own destiny. Then, too, the maintenance of Indian society's cultural and social integrity, in spite of its traditional well-trodden paths of the national society.

Barbados, 30 January 1971

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